ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
OF WILLIAM J. STUDER
BY RAIMUND GOERLER
AUGUST 18, 2011

Q. Today is August 17, 2011, and I'm interviewing Dr. William J. Studer as part of the Ohio State University Oral History project of the OSU Archives. We are working from a prepared set of questions. The first question, Bill: Your entire career was in librarianship. Please discuss what and who influenced you in this direction. And was library administration a goal that you had in mind at the beginning of your career?

A. Well, thank you for this opportunity, and I think that's a good place to start. I enrolled at Indiana University (Bloomington) in 1954 as a pre-med major with every intention of applying to medical school and becoming an M.D. There was nothing in my family in the way of heritage that suggested this, but it was something I had in mind for a long time. Somewhere around my junior year, which is the year in which you applied for medical school then at IU, I took assessment of what the medical profession would be like. And I sort of came up with the answer that I didn't really want to do that. Therefore I had to scramble to decide how to finish a bachelor's degree in four years, with a different major. And I fell back on something I had taken electives in, because I liked it, namely English Literature. And I did a B.A. in English Lit, which I received on time in 1958. But then the question posed itself, having gotten married in my senior year, "What do I do with a Bachelor's degree in English in 1958?" And the answer was that I didn't really know. I turned to a major English professor who had adopted

me as a friend as well as a student. He had done some thinking about the question I posed to him. He was involved in lecturing in the Library Science program at Indiana University, a program I didn't know existed, as I dare say many people did not. And he took me over to the Dean's office, the Dean of the Library School, and introduced me and said some things about me as a student, and then left it to Dean Margaret Rufsvold, and myself to discuss. And having listened to her for the better part of an hour, I was intrigued, that this indeed might be a profession that was something I could really relate to. And I made that decision. In the meantime, an opportunity to go to Sweden for an academic year abroad arose, and I did take advantage of that. And Dean Rufsvold was kind enough to put my admission on hold, along with a fellowship, which I took up when I got back. So I did receive my M.A. in Library Science in 1960, and again was faced with an unknown in the sense that I was subject to the military draft immediately when my academic work was over. And while I was pondering the probability of that, Dean Rufsvold nominated me for an internship at the Library of Congress, a prestigious internship which involved only six new library school graduates each year. And lo and behold, I was selected for that position at the Library of Congress, and took up my duties there in 1961. And I stayed at the Library after the internship, which was actually the point of the program. It was to school people in the complexities of the Library of Congress and prepare them for a career there. Albeit no obligation to stay, that was the declared intent of the program. And I was on that path, thinking that I could look around and see interns from ten and fifteen years earlier who indeed had climbed the ladder there at the

Library of Congress. And then Dean Rufsvold began to come to town frequently for consultations at the Department of Education, and she would come and see me in the library. She had put great effort into creating a doctoral program in the Library School at Indiana University and she dearly wanted me to be in the first class of students. So she began to lobby and recruit that I should do that. My wife and I were settling into Washington. We had lived through the Kennedy assassination and kind of felt that we were putting down roots there. We had no children and it was a great life. I just wasn't mentally prepared to go back to school at that point, and I had been declared ineligible for the Draft because of a stomach ulcer condition. But I made the Dean a bet. I said, "If you can get me a fellowship and this amount of money, I'll come back to school," never thinking that she would. And she called me a couple of months later and said, "Guess what? You've got a fellowship." So in June of 1965, I resigned from the Library of Congress and took up residency at Indiana University, again as a doctoral student. And as you well know, Rai, when you start a Ph.D, program you know where you are beginning, but you don't exactly know when the calendar is going to call it finished. And it did take me about three and a half years from the beginning until the defense of the dissertation. And when that was almost finished, when there was just sitting around to do waiting for loose ends to be tied up, the issue arose of where do I go for employment after receiving the Ph.D. And I had kept in close touch with a lot of the Library of Congress people that I knew. And library automation was beginning to take hold seriously in the library profession back then, in the late '60s. And the MARC Pilot Project was in force

and I had indeed used the machine-readable catalog records in my dissertation, to prove how those could be used advantageously. I went back to the Library at their invitation and interviewed. Those were interesting days. You didn't have to do things with due process. They just called on people they thought were qualified and gave them a job if they thought they matched the job description. And I came away from that set of interviews with two job offers. I was still waiting to defend the dissertation. The date had been set a couple of months ahead for that process. And at that point there was a position vacancy at Indiana University (Director of Regional Campus Libraries). The Director of Libraries at the Bloomington campus called me and said, "I think you ought to interview for this." And I said, "Well, I'm on my way back to the Library of Congress and I don't really think that is my cup of tea." And he said, "Well, if you've got nothing better to do while you're just waiting here, why don't you take this little circuit ride to the five regional campuses over a couple of days and see what you think." Well, I did that with a couple of faculty members and one of the other librarians who had some responsibility for regional campus affairs in library terms. And after a couple of weeks, I had an offer to become Director of Regional Campus Libraries. I had thought my wife and I were of like mind about getting back to the District of Columbia. As it turns out, that couldn't have been less the case because she said, "I don't really want to go back, and I think you ought to stay here." She was employed by a psychiatrist who was also a faculty member and had a private practice in town. Dr. Eldred Handke had become a very, very dear friend. So I kind of turned to him for advice. He was 20 some years our senior, and I thought

in a good position to give advice. He didn't really try very hard to persuade me, but he pointed out a number of things about university life versus bureaucratic life in the federal government. In the end, I sort of tossed a mental coin and opted for the position at Indiana University, and clearly that set my path into administration. Along the way after that I became Associate Dean of Libraries for the whole IU system in Bloomington. That was in 1972. And then in 1976, somebody, and I don't know who the somebody was, nominated me to become Director of Libraries at OSU. And that was the summer of '76, and I knew they were serious when they invited me back in the early fall of '76 for a second interview, and invited Rosemary, my wife, to come along. And the result of that was an offer, to become Director of Libraries here at OSU. And that posed a problem for us to think about because we are adoptive parents, and we had already been awarded one child, a son, by a Catholic agency in Indianapolis which had a policy that you may not leave the state and remain eligible. "We don't place our infant children out of state" they said. And I knew I could always find another job somewhere if I really thought I had to, but we could never get another child because we had an age barrier (we were approaching 40 very fast). So I said, "Let's see the adoption agency, just in the effort not to leave any stone unturned." And for reasons that we will never know, the CEO of that adoption home in Indianapolis, in essence took our name from where it was in the file and put it in the front, so that the next child who was born and offered for adoption became ours. And so we did get Rachel, and I accepted the OSU position for February 1, 1977. I can't say I was very familiar with Ohio State. I enjoyed the interviews here and certainly learned

a great deal about the University and the library system. I had been over in the late ’60s when they had invented the Library Control System, the first automated inventory control system they used for circulation. And I was fascinated with that. And I clearly understood that there was a seminal notion here that library automation needed to happen, and it certainly was just the opposite at IU. And I found that very intriguing [to have] a chance to part of that. Every notion of automation at Indiana University was put down by a classical professor who didn’t like the idea. And so it wasn’t going to happen over there, at least in an early timeframe. And it was for me professionally probably most of all a logical step. I had been through a secondary administrative position, a more primary one in the Associate Deanship of the IU flagship campus, and five years had passed. It was a logical move to become a Director of a research library, and I never had any regrets.

Q. As I understand it, we were pioneers in the automation business, partly because our circulation system, manual circulation system broke down, or use increased.

A. I think you’re quite right about that. I was very familiar with that circulation system which used McBee key-sort cards. They were edge-notched cards. It was a form of early automation, if you will. And it had broken down at Indiana University too, but they were willing to throw more manual effort at it to keep it going. It’s hard to explain but easy to understand when you see it. Edge-notched cards were notched out and then filed by call number and the due dates were part of the notching, and needles were fed into this huge file every day, and they were shaken, and the ones that fell to the bottom, fell off the needle, were overdue. And

when you renewed them, you had little pasties you put over to make the hole complete then, so that they wouldn't fall off until it was the proper date. And this was a perfect initial venue to apply automation to, as simple as that was. And the system here, I didn't learn this on the interview, but it was done under contract with IBM. And after it was finished and perfected to the point of usability, those under contract who really developed the system and maintained it, actually hired on at Ohio State as opposed to remaining contract employees. And that's how it all began. And I knew there was a really strong motivation to advance library automation here and to make it as pervasive and applicable as we could within the realm of automation development.

Q. I also understand, from perhaps legend anyway, that your predecessor Hugh Atkinson had an orientation that was very path-breaking, experimental. I'm told, for example, that his idea of administration, at least for time, was not to have a desk but to wander around.

A. That is quite true. When they showed me my office, not knowing exactly what my own persuasion would be at the OSU Libraries, my office had an architectural drawing table, meant to be stood by, not to be sat by. And there was no desk in the office. But I made it very clear very quickly that that wasn't my style. I like conventional desks. I knew Hugh, not well, but from library meetings. He was a frequent speaker and he was about as charismatic as librarians get. He was a dashing fellow who wore an eye patch because of a childhood injury to his eye, and he rode a motorcycle. And he was as smart as hell. There was no question about that. What he wasn't, was an administrator. He just didn't pay attention to

managerial detail. And unfortunately, as I discovered over that first year, he hadn't delegated very much either. So it was a very happy family, but it was not a very well-organized family, and the budget was in shreds and took a long time to sort out and put on a remedial path to get the budget back in order and in balance again.

Q. Now that brings up the more general topics: What kinds of challenges did you face? The budgetary you mentioned and this budgetary challenge apparently had been going on for quite a few years, even before you arrived?

A. I don't know if budgetary challenges ever end, but they certainly went on for my entire 23 years. It was, I think, more acute at the beginning, having to discover just what was going on with the budget. As far as administration I'll give you an example. In the acquisitions portions of the budget there was something called a current imprints fund, and it was to purchase currently published book materials, not serials but book materials. And it was not allocated. And so people soon learned, those in the business of selecting and ordering new materials for whoever got to the table, the "firstest" with the "mostest" of orders, got the lion's share of the current imprints fund. And did not want to get them any logical proportionality in that way. And I also came to discover within a few months, that the current imprints fund was in essence, with agreement of the publishers (with collusion of the publishers), a line of credit. On July 1, when the new budget became effective, the entire current imprints fund was owed for the previous year's purchases. And the only way to work that out was to begin to whittle it down and structure the current imprints to the point where you could then get the

equilibrium back. Eventually, we put it in a category where it was allocated. And people then had a known amount of money to work against and could select with that intelligence in mind.

Q. What you described, the system is rather mind-boggling because, how does an individual professor who has legitimate requests, get that request honored if the money has already been spent?

A. If the money's already been spent, they would have to wait a good long time for that book to be ordered. And I don't think there was very much understanding outside the library about the nature of that budget. The personnel budget was overextended, that is, there were more people on the payroll than there was base money to support. And that was made up by salary reversions from resignations and other kinds of vacancies in the course of the year and filled in with cash. Fortunately, you could fund positions at Ohio State on cash. You couldn't do that at Indiana University. There had to be what was called annual rate in order to make an appointment. But you could appoint somebody on cash in the OSU Libraries, as long as you came out cash-balanced at the end of the year. And so we didn't have any debt in terms of the view from the outside. But in terms of internal flexibility, and just rationale of budgeting, it took a while to get things categorized and in order. And in that sense I suppose I was a traditionalist. All the energy I would put into things like this, Hugh Atkinson probably would have put into entrepreneurial thinking. And I can't tell you which is right and wrong, but it's different. Hugh went on to be Director of Libraries at the University of Illinois. It was a homecoming. That was his alma mater. But sadly Hugh

developed a brain tumor within just several years of being over at the University of Illinois, and died rather quickly as a very young man. And there's a wonderful memorial award that's given annually, the Hugh Atkinson Award, for innovation. I can't think of the exact title. And I think that would have pleased him very much. I did go over to his memorial service along with dozens and dozens of other librarians, because he was very well known and a very popular guy.

Q. Aside from the budget, which I think is every Director's challenge, what other issues did you find?

A. I think the over-arching issue was organizational. The organizational structure of the library. If you think of a more traditional organization chart, it was pretty well non-existent. There was a lot of laissez faire, there were a lot of things done by committee, which in my opinion, should have been done by a duly appointed administrative structure. And so sorting that out, saying who related to whom, who reported to whom, how those things all intermeshed and how to untangle them and put them back together in a more rational way, took a lot more than a year to accomplish, because there were people involved [who were] used to certain ways of doing business. And you had to ease in that over-arching structure and convince people that this was a better way to do business, along with the budget that supports that kind of thing. There was almost no budgetary knowledge and authority below the Director's office. I mean it wasn't required of people to be responsible for certain portions of the budget, including the student wage budget. And you know, the OSU library along with every other major research library, depends on student employees for a major portion of its operation. But

people who hired didn't know how much money they had, to hire students. So again, like the acquisitions budget, it needed a firm allocation, so that people could plan the year and know what they had to work with, and not overrun unknowingly because they didn't know what they had in the first place. So it was a rather simple business management model needed by the library that didn't exist before, and it took time.

Q. And your business management perspective, was that shaped by your experience at Indiana or at ARL, or Library of Congress?

A. It was not at the Library of Congress, which is a federal bureaucracy run on a whole different set of principles. It was shaped some at Indiana University, which probably was at the time certainly a more traditional model than what existed at Ohio State, and less given to entrepreneurial work, too. So at Ohio State I believe we made progress and by the end of a couple years, I think the structure was pretty well in place. We had people on an organization chart who knew who reported to whom, who you go to with certain issues. And it was very clear to me after being immersed in this from the very beginning, that while I certainly aspired to be entrepreneurial, I was first and foremost a manager and interested in both doing the right things and doing things right, and making sure that the University Libraries had a position within the University of respect and even admiration for managing its business well. The other thing that it took me a little longer to understand fully was the maximum decentralization of the library system. Even within the main library, there were nine other little fiefdoms, subject

collections that had been broken out and put in certain rooms, so that you had to look in ten different places to see if we really had something.

Q. As I remember, the graduate reading rooms became actually discipline centers and the domains of various departments on campus.

A. We were able to dismantle those with the aid perhaps of the understanding eventually that there weren't any staff to make them work. And dispersal of staffing across too many different locations was a major issue. And we'll get into that later with the library consolidation. But that certainly was a major challenge, and I knew, to make things work better within the extant budgetary constraints, that it wasn't going to improve dramatically. We had to do something internal to free up positions, to make flexibility possible, That just wasn't there. It was a wonderful model to have every library that anybody ever wanted around the user group in the proper buildings, but if you didn't support that with adequate staffing, and with the money and the acquisitions with the funding, to support the model, it doesn't work. Take the physical sciences and engineering, for example. They all needed a lot of times the same books and journals. You had five different libraries; you had to buy five copies. That's not a very useful way to spend money.

Q. You've talked a lot about the internal challenges. Of course, the Director of Libraries is also to represent the libraries across campus and when you were hired, there was a relatively unusual reporting structure that you became part of: namely, the Vice President for Education Services, which included everything from Army ROTC and University Archives, which was part of that structure – probably the

smallest unit of that structure – to the OSU Libraries, which budgetarily was probably the largest unit. Can you comment on the challenges of that structure?

A. When one interviews for a position like Director of Libraries and meets the standing Vice President to whom that position reports, you get very little sense of whether it's a good, bad or indifferent reporting line, in terms of the welfare of the organization, namely the library, in this case. But it didn't take long after I got here to discern the disadvantage. Dr. John Bonner was the Vice President in question. I honestly don't remember if he had predecessors or whether that position began with him.

Q. Actually, John Mount preceded [Bonner].

A. Well we had, as you alluded to, continuing education, ROTC, The Fawcett Center, WOSU stations, learning resources and Archives. And Dr. Bonner would have a meeting every month, and you'd go around and say what was going on in your venue. Of course, ROTC could care less what was going on the Libraries, and I'm not terribly interested in the detail of the ROTC. But John had to hold court, as it were, at least it kind of seemed like that's what it was. I liked John. He was an affable guy. He really was. But the Vice President for Educational Services was a hodgepodge of reporting lines that bore very little, if any, relationship to each. And it had little to no authority over the budget. And that didn't take long to discern. In order to get anything done – in terms of major decisions or major programmatic thrust that involved additional budget resources – you had to go up the back stairs of Bricker Hall to the Provost's office, which is

where almost every other library in the Association of Research Libraries reported to. So this was an anomaly, this kind of reporting line.

Q. And an added fact: That had been the previous reporting line before Educational Services was created.

A. Right, right. So there were lots more minuses than pluses in this reporting line and the position – after being refilled by Kathryn Schoen after Dr. Bonner's retirement – was then dissolved. And the Library was reassigned, as it should always have been, to the Provost's office. And the Archives then were reassigned to the Library, which of course made sense. And I'm not exactly sure when Archivist Rai Goerler showed up on the scene here.

Q. Well, actually 1978. The previous Archivist, Bill Volmer, left in February of 1977, so there was quite a lengthy … yes, February 1978, excuse me. So there were quite a few months of nobody [running the Archives].

A. Bill Volmer was kind of a jovial fellow, but he didn't do much with the Archives under his tutelage. It was poorly housed. It didn't have a lot of budget support. It didn't have the promise of a lot of future support. And it wasn't, I think, appreciated or understood where it was.

Q. And Bill Volmer did tell me that at one point it was being considered as part of the Libraries, but Volmer, if his recollection is correct, claimed to have threatened to resign if it became part of the Libraries. And my understanding from others was that Hugh Atkinson had very little appreciation for Special Collections, and he wasn't in favor of [the] University Archives.

A. That aspect of Hugh I'm not so sure of, but Hugh certainly was not a book man. He was an entrepreneur. It's not that he wasn't appreciative of books and libraries and whatever. But that wasn't his major orientation. I think I heard that, too, and Bill Volmer, as you know, got the job as Archivist over at Budweiser in St. Louis, and I suppose finished his career there.

Q. I believe that's correct. It's been many years since I've talked to him.

A. And I think that was a much better fit. Not sure he had a great appreciation for history, let alone University history. I always have found it amazing, and maybe you did too after a few years of being here, that without a formal archive early in this University's life, an awful lot of good stuff still got saved.

Q. Well, yes, courtesy of James Pollard, who was the driving force behind the Archives. If we can go to the next level of reporting relationships – external – you were a member of the Dean's Council. Was this true even when you were part of Educational Services?

A. Yes, yes. There were a number of things to negotiate, one of which would normally be on the table: salary. It wasn't on the table because the salary structure was highly suppressed here at Ohio State, because of the cap on the President's salary, of about $55,000. I mean, that seems ludicrous when you think of the salaries of administrators in this institution today. We're not just talking about the passage of 25 or 30 years; we're talking about huge differentials in compensation. And they offered me as much as they felt they could, and in fact I moved laterally. I gained no salary in moving from Indiana to here. The issue of not having Social

Security here, and having a State Retirement System, was sort of a trade-off because roughly the same amount was being taken out and put in a different pot.

Q. I didn't realize that salaries were that poor back then. An Associate Director could slide over to the leadership position in the OSU Libraries without having a significant salary increase.

A. Ohio State remained certainly below the median (the entire time of my 23 years in office) of the Association of Research Libraries salary pecking order. The salary wasn't bad; it just wasn't of the highest order. I don't know that much has changed with the whole institutional upward movement, the salary compensation for administrators. I really don't know what my successor was paid, and I certainly don't know what the current Director of Libraries is paid. But back to the Dean's Council, I negotiated that as a condition of accepting the appointment here. And fortunately I was in a position that they really wanted me to come, and when you sense that, you don't want to take over-advantage of it, but you don't want to waste it entirely, either. And the reason I did that was because of the experience at Indiana University. The Dean of Libraries there, to whom I was Associate Dean, was the first one to be appointed to the Dean's Council at Indiana University. And they were certainly the same bodies. Deans are deans by and large across similar institutions. And I saw it as a great opportunity for library visibility, for educating Deans about library issues, for making them understand the need for support, and that this was really in their behalf and in support of their faculty and graduate student program, and not some isolated collection of materials that were there for its own self-aggrandizement. And you just get to

know people on a peer basis that way. You're sitting at the same table and therefore you're kind of an equal, even if they might think it's a little odd. And I never had that feeling that anybody resented or questioned my presence around that table. And this Council met monthly. It was a major, major administrative communications meeting. And so it gave the Library insights and opportunities to make decisions with information that otherwise would have taken much longer to filter down.

Q. That was a shrewd observation on your part. The Dean's Council actually goes back to the early 1900s. It was established by William Oxley Thompson. But from what you're saying, up until your arrival, the Libraries was not part of the Dean's Council.

A. Had no representation there, and therefore [did] not [have] anybody who would come back from those meetings and give the Library a report. There wasn't even an indirect kind of thing. I know [former OSU Libraries Director] Lewis Branscomb at least for a time in his later tenure reported to John Bonner as well, because for some reason there was bad blood between those two gentlemen. And I can't tell you why.

Q. The negotiation – you mentioned that your membership in the Dean's Council was a major negotiation. You arrived and continued to be Director of Libraries, whereas many librarians, academic librarians, have taken the title of Dean of Libraries. Was that an issue at all with you?

A. It was an issue but not a deal-breaking issue. Again, I saw that as a prestige on behalf of the Library, not on behalf of the individual who happened to be Director

of Libraries. But at that time I tried to make the case for the rationality of sitting on the Dean's Council with the Dean's title as opposed to a Director's title. And there certainly was some consideration of my proposal. That took a while to be debated (I supposed internally). I'm sure it wasn't much of an issue with the higher-ups at Ohio State at that time. And the conclusion was that, it just seemed more appropriate, and the message I got was, "It's time to drop that issue." And at the time of maybe a scant 100 libraries in the Association of Research Libraries, there would have been more Directors than Deans. There would have been a good sprinkling of University Librarians, which is a very honorable title that many institutions are loathe to give up. So it isn't that we were somehow being suppressed from a very mainstream movement. And the dean's title made more sense here because we had library faculty, which we'll get into later. But I truly never felt any disadvantage from a titular point of view, the fact that I wasn't called a Dean.

Q. Okay. One of the relationships, external relationships, of the OSU Libraries to the rest of the campus is through the Library Council, which is a University Senate [sub-entity] that actually goes back, goodness, it goes back to at least the turn of the century. William Oxley Thompson for a time was a member of Library Council. How was that body helpful or not helpful during your administration?

A. Library Council was like the one I was used to at Indiana University, and so I felt I had some kinship with that kind of external advisory body, and that's what it was. It wasn't a decision-making body, it was advisory. As you know, this was a standing body of the Senate that had membership prescribed by the faculty rules, I

think, i.e., how many faculty and how many students comprised the membership. In retrospect, looking back on 23 years of experience, I would have to say that they certainly were helpful. I wouldn't say it was a pivotal body over that period of time, and there many quiet years in terms of what the Council was interested in dealing with as opposed to major activity years. But the library brought most of the issues to the table. I never could get Library Council to see itself as an activist organization. Not trying to run the Library or dictate but just to be more involved in things that might be of interest and would interface the Library more effectively with the academic community. So we would wind up setting the agenda, and there was a Chair each year, a faculty member Chair, whose obligation was to give a report from Library Council to the Senate annually. And most of those did a very good job, and often that was an annual report that I might have given just for information, not indicating what Council itself had done in activity terms. The major role that I remember really being helpful was Library consolidation. We brought that to the table. It's one I mentioned earlier that I knew was going to need some attention. And over the course of a good year or more, we worked out a proposal, a comprehensive proposal, that took every Library and put it on a list down the left-hand column and took the right-hand column and said how these libraries ought to interface with each other, how they ought to be combined, and a structured rationale as to why this made sense and how it would result in good outcomes. Library Council was willing to take that on and willing to become advocates. The proposal then became a University-wide mailing with hearings. It was approved in principle, even though there were

objections for sure on the part of a small but vociferous group of faculty, mainly in the physical sciences. Ultimately, consolidation was effective, no question about that.

Q. Do you recall how early that was in your administration?

A. I'd say it was probably about mid-way through.

Q So it would have been the mid-80's?

A. Yes, something like that. I didn't really check that out, and [my] memory is poorer on dates than it is on issues. So that's what I recall as being their major accomplishment, is being an advocate and serving as those who conducted these campus hearings, which weren't widely popular in attendance but enough people came, and they learned something about the Library and what was in the Library's best interest. The problem with Library Council was it had changing membership all the time. And the people who would come in were appointed, I think, by the Senate, and they weren't always people who – some of them arrived and said, "I'm not sure what I'm doing here. This isn't something I have any particular interest in." They wouldn't say that in so many words; they would imply it. So you had this orientation that went on constantly. You were totally re-educating people all the time as to what the Libraries were, how they operated, what was in their interest, why it was, what wasn't in their interest, and so forth and so on. But over time, you had these people filter back out when they retired from their Council position, and they were people whose awareness of the Libraries was greatly elevated, and they were within the institution. So it was. We met in the academic year every month. We seldom cancelled a meeting, I recall. Must have

been one or two in there. I think if such a body didn't exist for the sake of representation and communications, we'd have to invent it. I dare say from what you say about the origins of Library Council, Ohio State must have been very early in structuring such a body.

Q. Yes, I believe Library Council even pre-dates Thompson. It might have been under James Canfield that the Library Council began. And the President was a member. In fact, I know that was the case because there is related correspondence involving Olive Branch Jones, the then-library director.

A. In a place this big you've got to have representation. There's just no way. For instance, at Miami University, there is a much broader percentage of faculty involved with the Libraries, just because there are so many fewer faculty. But here you had to have representation. And I think we forged a very good relationship with faculty and students through Council.

Q. One of the relatively unusual aspects of OSU Libraries is the fact that we have faculty status for librarians and that was true, even when you arrived in 1977, albeit was a fairly recent phenomenon because it began with faculty rank for only the top administration of the Libraries, and then became more generalized in the late 1960s. In the '70s and '80s, based on my personal observation, it was still a relatively controversial subject. Do you want to comment on that?

A. The controversy never went away. As you observed, it was granted to librarians of particular status in the late '60s. I think that was an action by University Senate. How the umbrella was broadened to include all librarians, I'm not sure if I recall that. It was certainly before my time. And the issue was that the University

mainstream couldn't cope with librarians as faculty members. And the consequence was that we almost never had anybody promoted because they didn't pass comparative muster with regular teaching faculty. They would tenure someone at the assistant professor level or even the instructor level, but they couldn't do promotion because you'd be sitting here with all the arts and sciences cases piled up, and all of a sudden this strange-looking library phenomenon would occur and they just threw up their hands. So I'm afraid it was an ill-advised kind of status to award without rationalizing it in some better way. It just became a festering issue because it had real champions within the Library who liked the idea. Once you give someone a certain status, taking it away, suddenly becomes very threatening. But we couldn't get any support for it among the revolving door of administration over in Academic Affairs because you just couldn't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and the structure within the institution for promotion and tenure just didn't fit what librarians did. And it wasn't, until an Associate Provost named Nancy Rudd, came along and in a sense decided, "Enough is enough, this is never going to change unless somebody does something to assimilate these people. We're not going to take their status away because that's just not the proper thing to do." And so with her advice and consent, representing the Office of Academic Affairs, something I think called Patterns of Administration was written; the criteria specified for what makes a librarian faculty member. And an external review process was established that would not involve the University-wide P&T [Promotion and Tenure] Committee, but be reviewed over in Academic Affairs by a subcommittee, with potential access to the University-wide P&T

committee, if necessary. And suddenly librarians got in essence what they wanted, and the controversy went away. And while lots of faculty would still shake their heads about librarians being faculty members, as they understood faculty, I think it just settled into a routine and we solved the problem that way.

Q. This would have been the mid-1990s but from the librarians'[point of view], the controversial aspects as I recall it, was that on the one side the library faculty status conveyed not only status but also some tangible benefits, namely the unassigned research time, which had to be accounted for in the usual concern about staffing.

A. Over the years, being faculty certainly resulted in better raises as opposed to being classified staff [status] or A&P [Administrative and Professional status]. So I think it was to everybody's advantage. I think we wound up being in a better position than many libraries that had faculty status but continued to have that same kind of controversy, proving over again what makes you faculty. And this took the question off the table. We didn't have to deal with that anymore.

Q. The result of that was basically a decentralization of the faculty status and promotion scenario by having patterns of administration that had some commonalties across campus but also allowed for local variations.

A. And we weren't the only anomalies. You had the extension faculty who were reconciled with a similar kind of process. And you had fine arts studio faculty, people who made art and didn't behave like regular faculty either. You look at their profile for promotion and they had to be reconciled and I think Nancy Rudd

took care of a lot of that before she retired. Bless her. She was a bright light in that respect. Anymore to say on that?

Q. Are you ready to turn to the subject of your leadership of automation of Library Services?

A. Let's see if I can think of something more on this. When I got there, of course, the status internal to the Libraries was being litigated as it were. We had a standing committee within the Library. They were called senior faculty, and they were anybody who had been promoted to Assistant Professor or Associate Professor. And prior to this, I think we only had one professor, Virginia Yagallo, who was the Chemistry Librarian. I was Chair, as Director of Libraries, of the Libraries' P&T Committee. And then people would adjudicate cases, and I was there for all of the debate and the conversation and dialogue, and then I would run down to my office and sit as the judge over what had just transpired, and it was crazy structurally. So we got rid of that, and in the process of rationalizing the library faculty mess, we also were able to take me out of the process so that I became the final person to comment on whether this was enough in balance to send it over to Academic Affairs, like any dean would in a college.

Q. And in fairness to whoever reads this document, the whole process of promotion and tenure as a process underwent significant revisions in the 1980s. Prior to that, it was a very casual undertaking with a simple letter, and it was only through the litigation compliance with federal laws, that it became a highly complex and bureaucratized process.

A. Our internal Promotion and Tenure Committee became a much more serious body with good guidelines, with policy written down. And I think with some very credible debate.

Q. I didn't realize how casual the process was until you mentioned it.

A. So we're into library automation.

Q. Yes, of course. In 1977 the automation of library services was still in infancy. The World Wide Web hadn't been thought of. And I believe you hired the first automation officer: That was Gerry Guthrie, wasn't it?

A. I'll tell you what my memory tells me anyway. When I got there, Gerry Guthrie was in the office next door and he, in fact, was nominally in charge of automation. If you talk to Gerry, he would loudly deny that because so much was assigned to committees, which didn't have any structure in terms of someone being responsible to see that committees were functioning progressively (feedback and all that kind of stuff). It became very obvious to me very quickly, because Gerry had interviewed over at Indiana University for the head of automation while I was Associate Dean, that he just wasn't suited to that kind of leadership role. He couldn't do the job effectively, and I think he realized that. And so after some give and take and some discussion and certainly conversation with Gerry about a better and useful role for him in the Libraries than that was, I simply plucked Susan Logan out of the mechanized information center, MIC as it was called, and put her in charge of automation. We certainly didn't have any position money to go out and recruit and hire and interview and that kind of thing. And Susan clearly had been closely involved for a long time. She had been a member of the

automation officeg which was disbanded in ’73 in one of the budget crunches before I got there, and was reassigned to MIC at that point in time. And I think she had spent some time in technical services. She was obviously capable and bright and was willing to take on what was a very major issue without a whole lot of substantial support for the office until we could somehow bring that about. What we needed was someone who could bring things together, who could become a lightning rod, if you will, [who says] automation starts here and it gets controlled here, and this is what we have to do.

Q. For the record, I think it needs to be mentioned that library automation here, as was said earlier, began as a circulation system. It was not a catalog.

A. Absolutely, absolutely.

Q. To develop it as a catalog and integrate it with the circulation system took time.

A. A great deal of time and redirection of money as well. And we did have some ad hoc support from the Provost’s office. They bought us a big set of terminals when we were ready to make our first pretense that this could be a catalog, and you couldn’t test that very well without having enough terminals around for people to use and give you feedback on that kind of thing. I think as we mentioned earlier, it was staff under contract with IBM that actually wrote the software and ran the Library Control System (LCS). The initial machines were teletype machines and not available to library users. It sounded like you were in a race track and you went into some libraries and heard that clackety-clack that happens with those kinds of machines. But they printed out some slip to take away that you’d returned your book and so forth and so on. And as a pioneering effort, I thought it

was probably ingenious because I don't believe there was another one in the country. There had been a few attempts with IBM punch cards, but not in a sense of online.

Q. I remember I was a graduate student at Case Western Reserve and our attempt at an automated circulation system had collapsed and I spent many hours writing out call cards. When I came to Ohio State, I was just flabbergasted how easy you had it here.

A. You could circulate a big pile of books a lot quicker than you could by filling out each with your name and address many times over and over again. So then these IBM contract people stayed on and were employed by University Systems. Budgetarily, I can't tell you how this happened because it wasn't within the Library's budget, to maintain and develop LCS. And it was to be with University Systems because they were the administrative University computing center with the mainframe. And this thing ran on a mainframe computer in the beginning. The PC was still a glimmer in somebody's eyes somewhere. And so we began to have the discussions about turning LCS into a substitute for the card catalog. That was pretty ambitious, even though it's not global like everything is today. It was a pretty narrow kind of a focus. But a real challenge and a great leap forward. I think, in fact, we were actually alone. We were succeeding. We actually considered LCS to be a card catalog for relevant materials, but we didn't close the centrol card catalog until 1982. We closed the card catalog in late '82, recognizing that LCS could be the card catalog only for things from that point forward, not retroactively, because there was no retrospective conversion of

records. But we might comment on that. I think it's important. When LCS was invented, it needed a database, and the database needed to be catalog record of the library collection. And in order to get that done expeditiously and I think without full consensus, Hugh Atkinson, who was in charge of this project, sent the card shelf list of the Library off-site for keyboarding (it was a card file simulating the actual books on the shelf) to a major metropolitan area. I think it was Dayton, but it doesn't matter. And card conversion was done. But only [roughly] 120 characters of records were converted into machine readable form. And they were done by people who were barely instructed on how to take a card and count; and the error rate in those records was 25 percent, if not worse. So there wasn't anything much you could do retroactively to make that a card catalog without an effort that we simply didn't have the money to mount. But then what happened was the beginnings of OhioLink, and our development of library automation became intimately intertwined with what was going to go on in Ohio, because they were a source of support that would filter down to us and allow us to be part of OhioLink, but allow us also to do things at Ohio State for Ohio State that we didn't have the resources to do on our own.

Q. The issue of budgetary resources before OhioLink: How did the Libraries before OhioLink manage to finance innovations such as LCS? Where did the money come from?

A. The money had to come centrally. It was either given to University Systems, and we did get reports on how much University Systems was "expending" on our behalf, but the money was not in our budget. And so the University supported it

by simply supporting University Systems. There were at least three full-time people who worked on LCS, and then parts of other people as needs arose. A lot of trouble-shooting and methodical forward progress. Because we were going to develop LCS into a full substitute for a catalog. We just knew it was going to take a long time, and we never did figure out exactly how we would do retrospective conversion of full catalog records in a high-quality nature, that had been done in such a minimal and slipshod way just to get the inventory control system, LCS, up and running.

Q. I'm curious, in the absence of external funding, was this an example of the back-stairs approaches to Academic Affairs, to try to make a case and secure some money centrally?

A. I don't have specific memory of that. I do have a memory of asking Al Kuhn, the Provost when I first got here, for a big supply of terminals for us to make a showing, a showcase of what this could be and what we intended it to be. And he came through with that. I think we got 50 terminals spread around the system. Other than that, I don't think there were not terminals around until that time, certainly a minimal number.

Q. There had to be good relations between you and University Systems.

A. Yes, I think University Systems considered us a showcase of something that they had major responsibility for doing. I mean, it was good advertising for them because they had done a very good job. We had weekly meetings with University Systems staff. It was a close-knit relationship. And as OhioLink developed and became part of the solution and we were going to get an online catalog according

to Innovative Interfaces, Inc., which had a contract for the OhioLink system. That relationship inevitably began to wane because it wasn't going to be very long before LCS died. Do you remember that hilarious funeral we had for it?

Q. Yes.

A. In the old 122 general meeting room when we said goodbye, then we welcomed OhioLink to come forward. And where Ohio State University Libraries would be if OhioLink had never come to pass at this point, I don't know.

Q. Indeed. You mentioned OhioLink, which began under your watch, and certainly had enormous impact on the development of OSU Libraries, not only in automation. Can you comment on its origins and impact on the Libraries?

A. Glad to. OhioLink's origins and development is something I'm proud to have been associated with. It began with the appointment of a Library Study Committee in 1986, appointed by then-Chancellor William Coulter, who was Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, and chaired by Vice Chancellor Elaine Hairston. I and Don Tolliver, who was Director of Libraries of Kent State University at the time, served as library administrator representatives on this committee. The broadly based and broadly charged committee was initially to look for solutions to costly library physical expansion. That is, the inevitable need to expand library buildings to house collections, which occurs about every 16-20 years, routinely. But the Committee was to examine how to apply emerging information technologies to make libraries more effective and efficient and responsive to users. It's fair to say I think that Chancellor Coulter and especially Vice President Hairston were pivotal in the outcome of state support for

establishing OhioLink in 1992. And in providing the five regional book depositories to address storage space needs. Elaine brought conviction and zeal to leading this effort and making sure that library resources and services were available to Ohio's academic communities, a very user-centered consortium indeed. State support has waned somewhat and perhaps the overall original commitment is not quite as strong as it once was. But OhioLink remains strong nonetheless. OSU and OSU Libraries, in spite of its size dominance, have benefited immensely from membership in OhioLink and from easy access to all other OhioLink member libraries resources. The library membership of OhioLink, I think, is in the high 80s or low 90s. Every library in the state of any consequence belongs, and some very small ones as well. A harbinger which I took not to be a positive one was the resignation of OhioLink's founding Executive Director, Tom Sanville, in 2010, over a controversy with the Chancellor's Office at that time. That I simply don't understand, and did not get a direct explanation from Tom. We all know that a given individual can't be held as the savior for all things, but it makes a difference who gets a founding job. Tom Sanville was responsible for an awful lot of progress in OhioLink at that time.

Q. I couldn't agree more. One of the things that, maybe in your commenting on, that in addition to Tom Sanville's leadership, much of the work of planning the common catalog was done by committees of librarians.

A. Done by a very, very carefully structured committees of librarians and some faculty members. Three major meetings were held across the state to articulate what OhioLink was to become. Vision papers were written. It was very well

planned. These planning sessions were really paid attention to. The transcripts of them were made available, guideline outline documents about what OhioLink would do in what kind of time frame and how it would benefit the state were all written, coordinated out of the Chancellor's Office. You can speculate, but I think if we hadn't had Elaine Hairston, and her staff, and Tom Sanville in that office at that point in time, OhioLink might well never have happened. It had to have central support. It had to have central leadership. And that's what the Chancellor's office brought to this. And while the funding certainly isn't what it should be, there's enough there to keep it going, and that probably wouldn't exist at all if it hadn't happened in the way that it did. And our library contributed more individually than some others because we had the people. Susan Logan was relieved of her duties at Ohio State and detailed to OhioLink for some months as was Carol Diedrichs. And they worked over in the early OhioLink offices to bring coordination with the committees and whatever they did to help OhioLink aborning.

Q. I think another name was Sally Rogers.

A. Sally Rogers was delegated in the same way. And I think some of those folks stayed the better part of a year on a part-time basis and made a huge difference, because the bids and/or contracts were coming in from vendors and all the other bidders on the OhioLink system. Those all had to be evaluated and site visits had to be made. Susan, I know, went on all of those site visits. But we took great care not to seem like we were the big 500-pound gorilla.

Q. The upshot of this was that the Libraries had a joint platform for technological development as well as acquisition of library materials that was not in place before OhioLink. We were very much on our own.

A. The only thing we did prior to the formal existence of OhioLink is we did decide to acquire the Innovative Interfaces acquisition subsystem, simply because it could work and make us more efficient on its own, even if we never went any further. But when OhioLink happened more fully, we simply integrated that subsystem. Maybe what's easily forgotten is OhioLink paid for the initial system installation in every library, including ours. It paid us over three quarters of a million dollars to do retrospective conversion of our catalog records. And we certainly put in-kind resources into that as well to push that way over a million bucks. Because without quality records, you can't have a quality catalog, and ours needed an awful lot of attention.

Q. Is it fair to add to the record that the rationale here was that by combining, by integrating services state wide amongst academic libraries, integrating the catalog, integrating the interlibrary loan systems and also coordinating acquisitions, the net result was significant savings to taxpayers of the State of Ohio?

A. Absolutely, and I think it was credible. I think the claims were credible and I think that's why OhioLink got the support. Now, there were expenditures that might not have been made in any case that resulted in lots of savings, so to speak, because of the beginnings of the purchase of common material. Electronic journals, a myriad of databases that individually would have cost libraries ten times more if you add up all the costs, then OhioLink buying it on our behalf and

negotiating use on behalf of all of its members, was a huge, huge savings. And then, in addition to that, huge access that many, many other academic library communities simply couldn't have simply because they didn't have the same kind of central support. Libraries heretofore bought all these things individually on their own, if [it was] affordable.

Q. I've heard for many years that OhioLink was touted as the national model for library consortia. Granted, there have been some recent organization changes that may have taken some of the muster off OhioLink's example, but for many years we were the leading model.

A. Well, as you know I've been retired for nine or ten years, so I've sort of been unplugged from the national scene. But I still think OhioLink is the model. I'm a little surprised that it wasn't replicated more because there was no contractual stipulation that [Innovative Interfaces] couldn't sell the system lock, stock and barrel, even though we had put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into defining it, and in a sense paying for it in that way, working with [Innovative Interfaces] making sure that it was what it turned out to be. I think that may be because in the various states, it was adopted in Vermont at some point, but I think the states didn't have the central structure or the collective will to do it in the same way, and therefore the support wasn't there. You know the budget for OhioLink now coming through the Chancellor's office may be not what it ought to be, [but] it's enough to keep it going, and the amount of money that was put into to establish OhioLink and bring everybody to the same level of operational status, was really substantial.

Q. Now when OhioLink came into being, you were then reporting to Academic Affairs.

A. Yes.

Q. And that was an easy sell, if you will, for Academic Affairs?

A. I think they considered it something that was out of their bailiwick. Glad to be informed about it but unless you're going to ask us for mega bucks – OhioLink even funded the book depositories, the construction of them – and Ohio State was glad to give us the piece of land we sit on right now. That might have taken some persuasion. It seems to me Vice President Jackson, Dick Jackson, was in office and was instrumental in securing this site for us and preparing it. So yes, they were glad to see this happen, but we weren't really asking them for any substantial amount of money.

Q. Okay, I suspect that was probably a pivotal issue, is that the money was coming from the state to finance these innovations rather than the University.

A. And even operational money, which is still in place, runs the repositories. It's just that the capital funding has dried up to bring on additional modules. We certainly need another module, don't we?

Q. Yes. So why don't we turn our attention to the book depository as a topic. I know you were, as I remember you were on the committee to look at different models?

A. Yes, this was a spin-off of the Library Study Committee. This could be an interesting speculation. What triggered the creation of that committee, I believe, was the fact that when all the capital requests came in a certain biennial year, I can't remember which one it was, because the universities in Ohio would submit

these independent of each other. There was no coordination at the University level. There were an extraordinary number of requests for expanding library facilities. And the Regents did a little research and said, “My God, twenty years ago we had this huge expense to build more library space to put all these collections in, we can’t do that anymore. And so let’s find some other way to do business.”

Q. And the Chancellor then was Elaine Hairston?

A. No, Bill Coulter.

Q. Bill Coulter, okay.

A. Elaine Hairston was Vice Chancellor, then along the way really Bill was a facilitator but in a sense delegated this whole thing to Elaine. And then she became Chancellor while OhioLink was still in its very formative stages and became a real champion. I truly think without her in office we would have had a different outcome, at least to some degree. The book depository program has always been an integral component of OhioLink and, in fact, was funded in the OhioLink budget initially, and remains funded in terms of operational budgets, to this day. I don’t know if that’s adequate for the entire operation but I think it substantially still does that. The physical depositories are modeled after the design at Harvard for maximum density of storage. The California and University of Illinois systems were reviewed but the Harvard model easily won out. It was simply clever to have shelving thirty feet high, 175 feet long, if I remember, and access via a converted kind of forklift with materials shelved by size rather than by call number.

Q. It certainly was innovative. It would prove a difficulty later, as we tried to weed the depository duplicates because of a challenge, because it's not in call number order.

A. No, that's right. The purpose of that then becomes contradictory to the original function and purpose of putting the books in there.

Q. Right, of course this is the benefit of hindsight as I remember it, and perhaps we were all naïve in thinking that there would be continued Board of Regents support for the program that they had blessed.

A. I suppose we should have known that the goose that laid the golden nugget somewhere waddled off. With you here especially we ought to remind ourselves that Ohio State took advantage of this program to re-house the Archives.

Q. That's correct.

A. Without opposition. The Archives were, as you know too well, were so poorly housed in three locations at least?

Q. Yes, and as I recall the matter, I had suggested, because we were not originally part of the planning, that we would give up our main campus space in Converse Hall to be used for classrooms and other noble purposes, if we could be moved to the book depository complex. And despite the wheels of the bureaucracy and how slow they could move at times, I think this decision took about less than 24 hours.

A. And if you look at this facility, the first module plus the "front room" facility, the other modules don't have these front rooms. These were put on for Archives. Well it's just wonderful we were able to do that. And I think it's made a tremendous difference in the life of the University Archives.

Q. I couldn't agree more.

A. And the visibility of University Archives. I mean, it's a wonderful use facility and a state-of-the-art storage facility for preservation purposes. At some point I hope somebody can come up with what in comparative terms is very modest construction funding, to put the third module on. With the changes in the Chancellor's Office downtown, I don't think it's ever going to come from there again.

Q. No, and I think that you referenced the golden goose, and I think that's been a challenge because we spent many years waiting for the Regents to step forward and realistically they have other priorities, and the University has not wanted to invest as long as the possibility exists of the Regents stepping forward.

A. You know, OhioLink, and its inception and when it was largely finished and operational, at least for demonstration purposes, had an audience with the Board of Regents twice. I was there. I was part of the presentation. And the Board of Regents simply isn't the same organization anymore. The authority is not vested in these members. They are almost window dressing.

Q. Right.

A. And with the new Governor and the new Chancellor, [Jim] Petro I think is his name, OhioLink has had a new Executive Director appointed. The one who was interim, John Marshall, I believe is his name. But I don't know a thing about him.

Q. Yes, part of the dynamics is that there's an integration, attempted integration of the Ohio's university system, and that includes K-12, and it's created complications for what used to be a fairly well-focused higher education body.

A. One thing we might say in conclusion about our depositories, versus Harvard, whose model we borrowed with their consent, certainly, their depository is about 50 miles out of town on a highway that's like a parking lot, where ours is right around the corner from central campus. And so access, physical access, is still a big issue and we have really the best we could possibly hope for.

Q. I think that state-wide we are the only ones that are in close proximity to a major campus, [of all the] book depositories, and it's become part of our circulating system.

A. And if I remember correctly, when Dick Jackson deeded this land to the depository purposes, it's prepared for five modules.

Q. Correct.

A. From the back end up to the railroad tracks.

Q. Right, as I understand it is between four and five, depending on whether we can get a zoning variance.

A. And I wouldn't think we'd ever need five. And maybe never four but a third one would certainly help in the interim.

Q. Absolutely, because some things are not duplicated throughout the state and that's special collections. This one is unique. Shall we declare a pause for the day?

A. No, I'm okay.

Q. Bill, you mentioned the University Archives as a significant beneficiary of the library book depository and certainly that's true. But looking at the question more globally, special collections flourished and in many cases began under your

administration. Would you comment on the development of special collections at OSU?

A. Yes, my favorite area. Special collections, in my view, significantly defines a research library and its mission to support research and scholarship. A principle strongly adapted early in my career and one I have been much influenced by [is that of] Indiana University Library with its premier special collection called "The Lilly Library." Soon after my arrival, there was an opportunity to develop and organize and inventory the impressive Charvat American Fiction Collection through grant funding, and this has become recognized as a premier collection in this genre, bested perhaps only by the Library of Congress. In addition to archives, globally speaking, the Byrd Polar Archives presented itself as another opportunity which you are very intimately aware of, right? And we took the opportunity to seize that, and I'm sure it is now worldwide in its ranking, rivaled by perhaps one other, the Scott Polar [Research Institute archives] facility in England. And I think that activity is just as intense as it's always been. That was a great opportunity. If you let these opportunities for special collections slip by, you can't put then back together again ten years down the line when you have a second thought, because it's not there. Organizationally, it's probably not feasible and the collections get scattered, and in many cases lost, I think. The Cartoon Research Library provided us an opportunity to build a research collection which no other university had taken seriously. And through dedication of its curator, Lucy Caswell, and eventual good University support, it is now the collection in the world drawing serious use by many people coming to Columbus. The

Hilandar Research Library of Medieval Manuscripts on microfilm came about from the passion of two Slavic faculty members, Father Mateja Matejic and Leon Twarog, with the library as a willing agent to support and incorporate this truly unique collection, which has grown greatly in renown over the years.

Q. The extraordinary growth of special collections during your administration occurred during a time when, as always, there were significant financial pressures, particularly there's typically a tension, if you will, between the library support, the library portion of the budget that's committed to support regular classroom activities, versus the special collections that are often linked more to global scholarship as opposed to scholarship that takes place on campus. One is more immediate; the other is more long-term, but yet they all require financing. Can you comment on that?

A. Yes, albeit I haven't thought a lot about this. Let me start with University Archives. I think that was more an issue of redirected funding than it was ad hoc funding. When you came into the position as University Archivist, I think you would be the first to admit that staffing was minimal.

Q. I think minimal is generous.

A. Operating budgets were bare. I was obviously committed to University Archives and wanted to make something of it, without realizing fully what it could and would become, wanted to make it something much more than it was. And part of this involved adequate housing. And we redirected funds after a while. One of the fortunate things about budgets at Ohio State is, if you have three budgets under the same family, like the Library, then you interact with those budgets and in

technology internally, without restrictive barriers. So I was able to reassign money to the Archives at budget over time in order to get on with that organization. That's awfully general, but I think over time that made a considerable difference. And I don't recall that we got a lot of external support or grant money to do things with University Archives, certainly until the Polar Archives situation came along.

Q. Well, they were there with the name more than anything else.

A. And then there was the grant funding that came with the acquisition of the [Admiral Richard E.] Byrd collection, which I assume is still intact. The endowment portion of that. Or am I misremembering that?

Q. I think what happened was the Byrd collection was purchased through an Ohio Board of Regents grant. But the actual curatorship was first assigned to the University Archives, and then gradually through internal reallocations, support was found for the staffing.

A. If we were to look at a personnel chart for University Archives today versus one from the day you stepped into office, it's very, very good staffing by comparison. And a lot of that just happened incrementally, year by year.

Q. With the Polar [Archives] operation you have a graduate position. For the University Archives anyway, one of the really big steps happened in 1980 with the consolidation of University Archives into Converse Hall and in 1981 the approval from you and from Vice President for Educational Services, Kathryn Schoen, for the Assistant Archivist position.

A. Right, right. With rare books and manuscripts housed in the Thompson Library, we were fortunate to get considerable grant money to process the American Fiction collection and make it known, nationally and internationally, and begin to buy materials to fill the gaps in that collection, which I believe goes from the origins of fiction to 1925. We were able to solicit manuscripts in the possession of the Wexner Center, many, many more manuscripts than we ever though they had, and were grateful to Sherri Geldin, that she was so willing just to deed those to us when she saw as a much more logical housing for them and showcase for them than Wexner ever had. The Cartoon Research Library is a very interesting case study of a threadbare kind of operation. The Milton Caniff Collection was accepted by the University and promptly put in a closet. When Lucy Caswell came back to work, I believe it was only half time, very shortly after I started if not just shortly before I started, she had been on extended maternity leave for a long while. Her two girls were still very small. And we managed to get a room over in the journalism building. They assigned a classroom to this collection, which then was joined by an OSU graduate, an illustrator named John Whitcomb. The collection didn't continue in that direction, but he was a well-known national figure. And then we had a national ceremony that brought a lot of visibility to the fact that this was going to be a cartoon collection without an inkling or dream of what it would truly become. But no support for staffing other than students, which we were able to allocate with cash out of the Libraries' budget. Lucy's position was non-permanent, on tender hooks from year to year to year, to the point where she was ready to throw in the towel. The interesting thing that happened there –

[W.] Ann Reynolds was the Provost at the time of Milton Caniff's 75th birthday party, which was a very large affair attended by lots and lots of celebrities and even the Air Force people, because of Caniff's "Steve Canyon" [comic strip]. It was a grand, grand event in the big ballroom at the old Ohio Union, now demolished. And I was sitting with Ann Reynolds and the Caniffs were there, as well as Lucy. And Provost Reynolds was so charmed by the whole event. And we took advantage of the halo effect of that evening. And she funded Lucy's position, which was no small amount of money when you take fringe benefits into account. And then it took an awful lot longer to get an Assistant Curator who could be groomed to take over. And adding student assistants here and there. And with the index money, we were able to add a lot to the Cartoon collection as well as Lucy adding a lot through the dynamic of her own curatorship in soliciting contributions.

Q. We'll talk a little later about the index question, but I did want to make sure the record referred to the fact that the Byrd Polar [Archives], the graduate student for the Byrd Polar operation here, was accomplished in a similar vein as you described with Ann Reynolds, namely a conversation that you had with then-Provost Ed Ray, in which I think Ed Ray challenged you to, if this was so important, would you provide half [of the funding]. And Ed Ray stepped in and provided the other half.

A. I'd forgotten that, right. He's still President of the University of Oregon, I think.

Q. Yes, yes. So, personal negotiation.

A. And catching people at the right time and in the right frame of mine. The issue with the Hilandar Research Collection, there's no substitute for passion, and Leon Twarog was just a passionate advocate for this. Our current Curator, Predrag Matejic – he and his father went to do the initial filming on Mt. Athos of the manuscripts there, many of which have perished in a fire now. And we have the only copies in the world, actually. And then it was like a snowball going downhill in terms of people wanting to put other materials there. You can't buy dedication in a way that Predrag has gone around the world, literally, soliciting additional materials for collection. And it's now reached a critical mass where it's just its own magnet. It just brings things in. Leon Twarog raised I don't know how much money by cajoling the Serb National Federation. I believe that remains an endowment.

Q. Correct.

A. The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, is that the one in Arts and Sciences? Anyway, they have put money into that. It's Slavic but it's nonetheless the medieval/renaissance period. And I'm sure other ad-hoc stuff that has come along. And we were able to reassign staff there to some degree. I can no longer remember exactly where Predrag's position came from. But it certainly wasn't there to begin with. We just gave them a room in the Thompson Library. I don't remember, was it in that room when you came on board? On the second floor of the old Library.

Q. Yes, second floor of Thompson. You haven't mentioned another special collection that began in your term, and that's Theatre Research Institute (TRI) Library.

A. Yes, named after Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. That was housed in the Lincoln Tower on the 14th floor. TRI came into a large endowment upon Jerry Lawrence's death of over a million dollars, which supports an Assistant Curator position. We were able to fund Nena Couch's position as Curator of that collection, I think with cash, and then incrementally turning that from cash into annual rate, until the position was fully funded in that way.

Q. Correct. I believe it was an arrangement you engineered, if you will, with Academic Affairs.

A. Because we didn't want the same thing to be happening to her that happened to Lucy for so many years. And that is a collection I'm personally less familiar with, spent less time getting to know. But a wonderful, wonderful collection. And I think again, having reached magnet status, it brings in a lot of donated material every year. The special collections in my opinion, have lost a little bit of luster and visibility by not having individual spaces in the new Thompson Library. You walk into the Special Collections reading room and it's everybody and it's nobody because there's nothing indicative there. But I can't pretend I would have been able to do anything differently.

Q. That particular matter is one that resulted from the desire for efficiency, consolidation of separate service points. It's resulted in some extended hours. But

certainly all three Curators involved are concerned about preserving their own identity of programs, because all of the donors are, in fact, distinct.

A. Right. And with Rare Books and Manuscripts, I think a lot has come in through bargain-basement purchasing. A lot has also come in through cultivation of donors, with emphasis on American Literature manuscripts and primary research material coming. A lot to do with Geoff Smith's cultivation of people. Friends of Libraries have certainly provided money to acquire this and that, and certainly have provided solicitation help from time to time to bring things in.

Q. Probably the collection that stands out as unusual in the way it came about, particularly its funding, would be the John Glenn Archives, which is now called the Ohio Congressional Archives. Because that was engineered at a higher level, the President [of Ohio State] and the Senator [John Glenn]. And in fact, I confess that I was greatly fearful, even opposed, to this extension of program because previous experiences [taught me it] was a matter of scrambling for resources, and in this unusual case, the John Glenn Archives, it came with a budget provided by Academic Affairs.

A. In this case I think we were the beneficiary of a University conviction that it had to do something with John Glenn, and with his archives. Clearly, they didn't belong at Muskingum College because they would have just sat on the shelf there, and it's not an appropriate place for a research collection. And John Glenn was personally quite enthusiastic about having his collection here.

Q. Very enthusiastic about the University creating a center. So that's been unusual and distinctive amongst the special collections in terms of funding. In fact, for a

time we were in the odd position of having a funded budget while the John Glenn Center itself was trying to get a budget.

A. John Glenn turned 90 recently, and he's healthy at that age, right?

Q. Indeed, indeed, spectacular. Special Collections can make no claim on being efficient, and they often will sit for decades and decades before some scholar finds some interest in them and something comes to light. But it's an obligation I think of a research university to create and retain and expand and shepherd these kinds of materials, because no one else will do it otherwise.

Q. I appreciate that. It's also been, based on my observation and experience, a mission of the Curators, to make sure that these special collections are not isolated, but rather as best as can be accomplished, part of the academic life at the University.

A. Yes, because they need help in being discovered, these collections.

Q. Absolutely, whether this is through special events, exhibits, or even better, integrated into existing courses. Special Collections presents special challenges because these are by definition unique or rare materials, special challenges for preservation I should say, but this is also an opportunity for us to discuss the development, the advent, of the preservation program here at Ohio State. Because before then, even before Special Collections, there was no special effort at preservation. That began under your administration.

A. Right. The preservation movement and research libraries gained great momentum in the '70s and early '80s, somewhat concurrent with my taking the position here at Ohio State. And many academic libraries then began to take seriously the

challenge of preserving their deteriorating paper and film-based collections. Ohio State Libraries had no program of significance in this area beyond an internal bindery, which I soon closed because of its cost inefficiency. So in order to make a quantum leap into his area, we carved out funding and hired a preservation officer, Wes Boomgaarden, a product of the preservation program at Columbia University in [its] Library School. Wes headed this effort in the late ’70s and it has grown remarkably, and now ranks, I would guess, highly among our peers in a state-of-the-art facility in the new OSUL Tech Center, which I think opened within this past year. It had rather dungeon-like quarters over in the old Thompson Library but still had a great impact. We have a hands-on specialist in Harry Campbell, who can put a rare book back together and make it look like it was when it was produced new. We handle mundane things. We’re into de-acidification of American Lit monographs, for example. There are things here from the University Archives. I think the William Oxley Thompson papers are pretty brittle, right?

Q. I can remember the first volume of University Faculty minutes in 1873 that received binding and preservation.

A. I think we tackled this on a title-by-title basis for individual items that needed attention because they are precious, and then on a more massive scale.

Q. Yes, and with your oversight and encouragement, Wes undertook surveys, established best practices for handling materials, and was a fundamental agent. In fact, he was the principal investigator on quite a few committees on institutional cooperation grants that led to preservation microfilming endeavors.

A. It goes beyond bench preservation as well because Wes was very good and I think it still exists, in disaster planning.

Q. Absolutely.

A. People knowing what to do when certain things happen that prevents the disaster from being anymore widespread when it happens. And it doesn't matter how good your facilities are; disasters are going to occur. Leaks are going to occur. Fortunately, we've had no major fire, and we'll hope it stays that way. I don't know what our total staffing would be under the rubric of preservation now. But we started with very little, doing what we could until we could add staffing, if you remember Wes' office was part of the hallway over in the administration wing, because we had no other place for it. And I must say that he and I were immersed for at least two, maybe three years in this whole issue of whether deterioration of books, post-Civil War era books, up until the present time, could be arrested through this mass de-acidification process, handling thousands at one time. Unfortunately, after due examination, these claims for being able to do this, even at the Library of Congress, turned out to be bogus. But yet, the condition of books can be greatly helped one at a time, ten at a time. So it was an important program to establish. Having established it, it then sort of recedes into the background; it becomes part of daily activity. But if you think of that prevention facility over in the Tech Center, which I saw pretty thoroughly when they had their open house for people to see their new facilities, it's marvelous. And, I can't imagine that a great many libraries have anything better than we do.

Q. I want to turn our attention, if I may, to another program that developed under your administration, and that was the User Education Program. The Library – ever since Olive Jones back in the early 1900s – had some aspect of user education, namely an effort to educate undergraduates with the basics of selecting and using library materials for course purposes, but we really did not have a full-blown user education program that would do outreach to undergraduates until your arrival and the leadership of Virginia Tiefel. Would you care to comment?

A. Pleased to. The user ed program has flourished at Ohio State University and I think continues to flourish because of one person who began work at OSU when I did, namely, Virginia Tiefel. She was hired mainly to oversee the undergraduate library, but we soon determined that instructing students in basic library skills was a vastly important issue, which OSU had not ventured into in an organizational way. And hence, Virginia was asked to form and head the Office of User Education, and she developed a comprehensive program, which she did with distinction, aided very ably by Fred Roeker and Nancy O'Hanlon. Fortunately, we had the cooperation of University College in utilizing the UVC 100 course and could thereby reach almost all incoming freshmen with one classroom-based general session of library-use instruction, for which many library faculty volunteered. Nancy went on to develop an online instruction of which I'm sure there have been iterations beyond my knowledge. It was very effective. Also, we should note that many other subject-oriented library faculty gave advanced library instruction for the advanced students. I believe our program was recognized as a model for large institutions. And one of the fathers of user education, Evan

Farber, from over at Earlham College, told us on countless occasions at how amazed he was at what we could accomplish in this large setting because he thought user education was so much better done in a small-college setting. And I know user education continues today. I'm just less aware of what's going on in the last ten years.

Q. If I can comment, user education, particularly before the advent of online instruction, was extremely labor-intensive.

A. Certainly was.

Q. And one of the advantages that Ohio State had was the fact that our librarians were facult,y and teaching the UVC class accounted, or counted towards, the conventional definition of teaching.

A. And it looked very good on the resume.

Q. Absolutely, so all of us, however we felt about dealing with undergraduates, had a self-interest in making that program succeed.

A. And we were very fortunate to have the vehicle of UVC100. If that mandatory course did not pre-exist we couldn't have created it. And the same program attempt at Indiana University did not succeed very well because there was no like UVC course. And the attempt was made to lace it into the English Department, which instructed an awful lot of freshmen, but then departments don't like to give up even one class session. University College 100 was a different kind of orientation course where this kind of module fit right in.

Q. So Virginia was a pioneer in getting that UVC100 class created?

A. Oh no, I don't think Virginia had anything to do with that. That pre-existed.

Q. Okay.

A. And it was just that she was a tenacious pioneer in getting them to agree to giving us one of the class sessions.

Q. Oh, okay, good, a library component.

A. Because we only had ten sessions in the quarter.

Q. Very good. And we should also hasten to add that the challenges were both on the part of the numbers, because for many years being the largest University, but also a University with open admissions, which meant that anybody who graduated from an accredited Ohio high school, regardless of their academic skills, could be admitted.

A. If they got the application in early enough, they were in.

Q. Yes, yes, and that presented challenges in orienting people to use a major library.

A. And I'm sure that the instruction that these students received, as invisible as it might be to any of us on a daily basis, did a great deal of good in that student's ability to be able to access library resources.

Q. Okay. Bill, under your administration, many things that we've already talked about began but one of the things that was already in place is OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) and the University's close relationship to University Libraries with OCLC. And you served on its board for many years. Would you discuss your experiences with OCLC and the impact on the University?

A. Okay. OCLC was founded in 1967 with only Fred Kilgour, the CEO, and a half-time secretary, and it was housed in the OSU Thompson Library. The site of that office in the current renovated Thompson is noted with a plaque, though I haven't

seen where the plaque is. Lewis Branscomb was the OSU Library Director then and closely involved in OCLC's creation and origin. OCLC, by the way, stood for Ohio College Library Center, and we'll use those initials later with different word meanings. And Lewis did spend a great deal of his time in the late '60s and early '70s on bringing OCLC to fruition because Ohio State had a leadership role as it certainly did in bringing OhioLink along the same path a couple of decades later. OCLC was indeed to be for Ohio what OhioLink eventually became. But the demand for its products and services grew so strongly and quickly that it became a national organization in the late '70s. When I arrived in February of '77, Fred Kilgour quickly put me on the OCLC Board. But our almost exclusive focus for that year was to sell the membership on going national, not an altogether easy task, and the vote in December of 1977 was close.

Q. Let's turn our attention to the operations of the Libraries itself. One perennial concern for administration is the acquisitions budget. You touched on this earlier, and it strikes me that one of the outstanding accomplishments of your service was the creation of a library materials index that enabled for many years the Libraries to cope with the extraordinary cost inflation of library materials. OSU was one of the few able to do that, to significantly raise the standing of the Library amongst its peers. Can you comment on the origins and impact of the materials index?

A. Yes, glad to, Rai. It is, I think, an important issue which still ripples today. The background for this is the extraordinary inflation in the publishing industry in the '80s and '90s, probably still continuing today relative to the CPI [U.S. Consumer Price Index]. And I kept pounding on the essentiality of library resources and

services to the overall University mission and quality and pleaded the fact that extraordinary inflation in the publishing world, especially for scholarly journals, was an unavoidable cost that had to be met in order to maintain the quality and integrity of library resources. And eventually, the Library index (tracking publishing inflation) was established by the Office of Academic Affairs, the Provost's Office, and for many years we received huge sums of dollars to offset inflation and keep pace. I don't know exactly how long the index lasted, I would say a dozen years more or less. And it was calculated according to an agreed-to formula that the Office of Academic Affairs actually concocted in their financial area. And we provided the data. Gay Donnelly would feed them the data every year and they would come back with what that data meant in regard to the inflationary increment that we would be allowed. And it was strictly a mathematical calculation. And I think at times it was in the range of 20-25 percent. Of course, it would fluctuate year by year. It ended at some point, I know. I don't exactly know why, except the changeover in personnel in a place like the Office of Academic Affairs brings new perspectives, new priorities; and millions of dollars over the life of the Index had already gone into the base budget. These were not cash infusions that disappeared off the books at the end of every year. They became part of the base budget, which then became part of the base on which the next increment was calculated. So it had a real ripple effect in that respect. All I can say is, I think it helped us cope in a way that University Libraries without that kind of help could, and they had to curtail their acquisitions dramatically.

Q. Because the OSU Libraries was perhaps unique in the state in the Library Materials Index, do you have a sense that we carried more of the acquisitions weight for OhioLink than other institutions?

A. I think that's difficult to say. I think the short answer is perhaps a little bit but not a great deal because we already had a substantial profile and acquisition of scholarly resources that were unique in the state. Other libraries simply weren't acquiring this kind of material. And perhaps other libraries depended on us for the occasional need for that kind of material. As OhioLink progressed and evolved and was funded rather generously in the first ten years, they began to take up some of the slack in terms of subscribing to huge databases of electronic journals. The Electronic Journal Center became a dramatic success for us. It didn't really affect the current year or two or three because publishers would insist that you maintain your subscription in order to have access to the back files. So I don't think we somehow changed our acquisitions profile relative to the Index; we simply maintained it.

Q. At a point in the administration of your successor, Joe Brannon, there was a criticism that these kinds of indexes only served to fuel the greed, if you will, of publishers. Did you get any sense of that during your administration?

A. With regard to how other libraries felt? Or this frame of mind?

Q. This frame of mind, exactly.

A. No, I don't recall that ever being any kind of mainstream commentary about the Index. In the two meetings a year of the Association of Research Libraries, I don't recall a library index or something like a formula of index library, inflation to the

publishing world as opposed to the CPI. So some individuals may well have felt that way and, of course, if you're paying these huge amounts of money additional every year for the same acquisitions profile, it certainly looks that way, but the choice was between that, and we succeeded to be able to continue to maintain our profile and simply eliminating those journals and denying access to them to the faculty. These really were research materials, maybe also for some graduate students, but they were a faculty resource. And you know, not heavily used. I mean, scholarship costs money and it isn't always effective and efficient in a given year. You buy it for posterity.

Q. Okay. My understanding of the demise of the Index was that, as you say, there were changeovers in personnel. There was also the constraining fiscal environment of reduced funding for public higher education, and I dare say, the Index fell to those kinds of pressures.

A. Yes, I'm sure you're right and I think we held our breath every year, especially as the years went on, waiting for word that this has been a nice ride but we just can't sustain it any longer. But so long as I was in office, that didn't happen.

Q. Do you recall individuals in Academic Affairs who were particularly helpful in establishing the index?

A. In establishing the index? You know I'm foggy on that. I'd have to do some research. It was still in force when Ed Ray was Provost, the last Provost I reported to.

Q. Yes, I think that's when it ended.

A. And I think Ed was probably party to the ending of it after I was out of office, maybe no more than a few years, the first year Joe was [OSU Libraries Director]. I don't really know that. And it wasn't that the first time we threw this on the table that everybody said, "Gosh almighty, I wish this had occurred to me." It took repetitive lobbying on the part of the Library, and for reasons which we may not be entirely privy to, one of the argumentation sessions took effect and then it became routine. It wasn't an issue that had to be debated every year and reestablished for the rationale; it was just, feed them the data, the money came back in the acquisitions budget.

Q. This is speculation on my part but aside from the rationale that you were able to provide Academic Affairs, it also fits in quite well with the theme of excellence, certainly the [OSU President Edward] Jennings administration.

A. Right. So whether something like a library inflation index ever came to the President's attention in a direct way, I don't know.

Q. When we speak of library materials index, that applied to acquisitions only, correct? More specifically, only the library materials but correct me if I'm wrong please, it did not have any impact on the personnel side of the operating budget?

A. You're absolutely right. There was no relationship there. The increments on the non-acquisitions portions of the budget, including the personnel base, were the same as they were for any other college or unit within the University. Guidelines were published and the Library seldom fared any better or any worse than the rest of the institution at large, with the exception of the acquisitions budget. Which one of the argumentations for that I made in the Dean's Council when I had a

chance to make presentations, that this wasn't for the Library; this was for all of you. This is to support your faculty and the greater institution in our research efforts.

Q. Yes, I imagine it's difficult, if not impossible, to connect the dots, so to speak, in that it takes people to buy _____.

A. It takes people to even select or interact with faculty, to make sure you are buying the best resources for the dollars involved and to process the material and get it ready for use. We just felt if we bought it we would get around to the other things if we developed backlogs eventually. I have a phrase that I used quite often and that is, "Acquisitions delayed is acquisitions foregone." If you don't buy it this year you're not going to buy it next year because you've got all of next year's material to consider and not enough money for that.

Q. Okay. Good point. And the library materials index money – that could also be used for special collections as well?

A. Oh sure.

Q. Okay.

A. It's just that it needed to be spent out of the acquisitions line so that the expenditures would wind up as data input to the next year's index.

Q. Okay. Another aspect not related to the index but certainly related to acquisitions, is that during your administration the Libraries were able to receive acquisitions money from the income derived from trademark and licensing arrangements that had been contracted by the University.

A. I'm very pleased you brought that up. It entirely escaped my memory, and it remains in place today to my knowledge.

Q. Correct.

A. I think the person we have to thank for that has been lost to history: John Kleberg.

Q. That's correct.

A. I don't know what capacity he was serving in at that time. John had so many different positions within the University, I can't recall where he was when that happened.

Q. I think he was Assistant Vice President for Business and Finance.

A. And he chatted a little bit with me about that but not directly and certainly didn't raise my expectations.

Q. As I said, I believe John Kleberg was an Assistant Vice President and we did interview John Kleberg as part of the OSU Oral History program, so hopefully that was captured. But how did this come about?

A. John Kleberg was always a good friend of the Library. When I arrived, I think he was head of safety, Chief of Police. Back then I don't know what the exact title was. And he came to see me, to introduce himself, and to say anything he could do to help the Library's cause and whatever, just give him a call and see if it was within his purview. And we maintained a good relationship. We would see each other over the years. Certainly, I must have talked to him about the status of the Library and the need for additional funding. But I don't recall that we had any specific conversation about the potential for trademark and licensing money to be divided in a way that some would come to the Library. He just announced it one

day. There's another interesting sideline that I'll go into and see if it's of any interest to you. I think you may know about it. It has to do with the lights on the front steps of University Hall, the lamp posts. The Dean's Council used to meet in the Fawcett Center in Alumni Lounge. And in the nice weather and during break we always would mill around outside. Well, outside in a couple of niches were these clearly 19th century type lamp posts just sitting there. Nobody had a clue what they were all about. I talked to Dan Heinlen, the Director of the Alumni Association, and I'm not sure Dan knew for sure but he did some research. It turns out that when University Hall was reconstructed from the ashes of demolishing the original, these lamp posts along with a few other memento things were saved from the building. They were not put back according to what Dan could find out because student unrest was still very vivid in peoples' memory and they thought of these as being torn off and broken. And then as time went by they were forgotten. My office window looked directly at the entrance to University Hall, and it had the old stone archway. And I said, "How nice if the lights could get back." And I shopped around. It was about a $3,000 job. I got an estimate on it. And the Library had no money to do something external to its direction like that. Eventually, after a long pause, it got to John Kleberg. We talked about it a little bit. And one day he called me and he said, "Look out your window and see what's going on." John found money to put those lamps back and not with great expense. So in a similar vein, he just called one day to tell me about the trademark and licensing money. He had somehow persuaded people to give us 15%, annually. Who else might have been in on that debate and decision? I haven't any

idea but the money came every year regularly. And as I recall, I tried my best to save most of that money, extraordinary funding, which we could sort of count on but not exactly the amount, because it would fluctuate according to the sales of various Ohio State memorabilia. I used it for Special Collections, allocated that to that purpose. Today, it must amount to a considerable sum of money.

Q. It's several hundred thousand dollars a year. It does vary but I think the low point of its variation is something like $300,000.

A. It wasn't anything like that, but it was certainly substantial money for us.

Q. Okay. While the acquisitions portion of the budget grew, the personnel/operating budget, which pays for salaries and supplies and services, struggled and didn't benefit from the extraordinary growth in acquisitions. One of the themes of your administration – in order to help the operating budget be more effective – was to reduce the number of service points, especially the small departmental libraries outside of Thompson Library. This was to use Human Resources more efficiently and effectively. Can you comment about the development and controversies in that process? You mentioned earlier about the consolidation plan that was supported by the Library Council but as I remember it, one of the really big controversies was over the Science and Engineering Library.

A. Yes, that was certainly the apex of the controversy, and it dragged on for some time before we declared victory, so to speak. I began early in my career at Ohio State to lobby for library consolidation because the maximally decentralized model for OSU Libraries had historically chosen, was a good one for service delivery, if well-funded. But provision of ample staff and duplicate library

materials to make the model work well, were never forthcoming. Hence, I opted to argue for a combination of department libraries in order to combine staff and acquisitions funding to provide better access and better all-around service. Library Council spent a couple of years on this issue and subsequently endorsed the plan, which actually was implemented for the most part over a number of years. The consolidated Science and Engineering Library was a particularly tender case. We're talking here about the independent libraries for Mathematics, Engineering, Materials Engineering, Physics and Chemistry. With the exception of Physics, which was at least remodeled space to be a library, the others were just cannibalized classrooms and other spaces. And dingy and broken down with short hours for the most part. And certainly not able to be very service-oriented, the way we would like. So the opportunity with the building project for Mathematics complex was to extend that, a Philip Johnson building, which rather than an extension became [more like] an independent standing library, which the University was willing to fund. There was a specific committee appointed by President Jennings of faculty from these areas. We're talking here about objections from a relatively small number of vociferous faculty, who in my opinion simply wanted these libraries kept on the premises for their own convenience. They had keys, they could come and go as they liked. Really, there was very little seating in these libraries for students. Very little service that students could expect other than the collections were there when the building was open. These faculty were very vociferous, and they said lots of bad things about my motivations and so forth and so on. And I believe Joan Leitzel from the

Provost's office got involved in mediating this committee's deliberations, if you will. That's my best recollection anyway. And the debate went back and forth and on and on. And I think in the end we just agreed to disagree. The Library said this is a good move; it's a good opportunity. Similar combinations at other universities had resulted in remarkably upgraded service, and so we pushed forward. And eventually it wound up on President Jennings' desk. The faculty were adamant, they did not want this to happen. And the faculty who either might have been mildly supportive or neutral, as you might expect, never said anything. It was those who were very negative about it. But the President said in essence, "We've had the discussion, considered the issues, and we're going to move ahead with the Science and Engineering Library." And that was the end of that. But it was not the end of these faculty [members'] ire, this having happened. So it was built. A grand building, I think. Not what you usually see in a Philip Johnson design with regard to avant-garde style. And I know it's being somewhat remodeled right now to accommodate different purposes, but with that consolidation we were able to stay open with no additional money 24 hours a day. I think the closing days were no more than you could count on the fingers of one hand in the course of a year.

Q. That's correct. Typically, up until recently, the Library would close during major winter disasters, and even now that's changed. So that's the one Library that we try to keep open no matter how bad the conditions are on campus. You touched on a matter that is still subject to question, and that is the wisdom of the Science and Engineering Library being a 24/7 library. The perspective of some in the Library is that there are very few users in the building between 2:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. to

warrant that kind of a cost. Is there any more you can say about how that 24/7 came about?

A. It was one of the promises we put on the table to illustrate what could be done with a combination budget without costing additional dollars. It was sort of dramatic because the longest-open library in the system was the main library, open until midnight five days a week and until 10:00 [p.m.] on Fridays and Saturdays. Here, [there were] these independent five libraries, which closed very early and had very limited weekend hours, maybe some none at all on a Saturday. We were able to take that and turn it completely around. The use numbers in the shank of use hours during the day and up through the early hours of the morning, they just went through the roof. This place was standing-room only, waiting for seats. I think, if I recall, that on some floors carpeting had to be replaced very quickly because the traffic was just so heavy. I'm not sure if you weren't in these areas and visited a lot, that you had any sense of that. One of the ways we minimized the cost of keeping this open was, we did not circulate materials in the wee hours of the morning, and we had a uniformed security person, not a police looking one but a blazer kind of security person, [which] was provided by the same service that staffed security at the Wexner Center. And we actually transferred enough money to have such a person come on board. And we were able to do that with the consolidation of cash that was used, in essence, to run these other libraries. So, I never had a second thought about that. It was the right thing to do. It was certainly the right thing to do for the interest of students, both graduate and undergraduate students, and I think it became something of a crown

jewel in the library system during that time. The faculty who remained with a chip on their shoulder for a very long time wrote a series of letters impugning me and the fact that I had brought this whole matter to fruition and suggested that Ohio State could do a lot better than Bill Studer, so let's get rid of him. And Ed Ray, who right up until the end, Ed would send me the letters. I have a file of them. He probably didn't want them in his file. I don't know. I think I still have most of them somewhere. And we tried to be as sympathetic and considerate and conceding to what they wanted as we could possibly be. We put in compact shelving in order not to export any more than the very fringy materials. I think that's changed now. I think it's being stripped down a lot more, as more and more electronic databases reach back further and further. For electronic substitutes for print you are able to divest yourself of that kind of collection. In addition to that, I should mention the other consolidations: Biosciences and Pharmacy were combined in a new Pharmacy building. Education and Psychology, Social Work and Human Ecology were combined in Sullivant Hall after the closing of the undergraduate library, which is another issue that Library Council took on in the course of a year, year and a half. It was controversial, but it was very clear because we went to Student Council or whatever the organized body of students was several times, had discussions, and there was a huge consensus that if the Library was cogent and relevant at some point in time, it had lost that because they didn't use it. We did studies of who was there when and it was basically, not only underused but almost unused for the amount of money it took. And the collection there was essentially 100-percent duplicate.

Q. Even when we closed the Thompson Library during your renovation, which had significant impact on Science and Engineering Library which was hard-pressed and overcrowded, we had a very difficult time trying to persuade students to use the Sullivant Hall Library. For some reason, the geography simply was disadvantageous there. But I did want to add a historical note: One of the reasons, perhaps the chief reason for the proliferation of the department libraries across the campus, is because the Thompson Library, when it was built, was built too small.

A. It became overcrowded almost immediately.

Q. Yes, as early as the 1920s there was discussion about expanding the Thompson Library, which wouldn't happen until 1951. So this expansion was the result of the campus; the number of libraries growing was the result of the campus growing, and the Thompson Library not [expanding]. Which I think leads to our discussion about your concerns for the Thompson Library that ultimately led to the major renovation.

A. Just to put a finishing touch on library consolidation – illustrated best by the Science and Engineering Library – I think the outcome of these consolidations, I would say across the board, more than verified rationale for taking the action. And I think the library system is better for it. We also built additional libraries. Cartoon Research [now the Cartoon Library and Museum] got quality space in the new Wexner Center, as did the Fine Arts Library. The business library, ironically now closed, was a stand-alone library that was incorporated in the new, and I think grand campus for the College of Business, and so forth.

Q. I'll turn your attention to the Thompson Library renovation, which was near the end of your career but was a continuing concern. In fact, you arrived shortly after a renovation or addition to the Thompson Library had been completed.

A. That's where I think the story begins. We call it the 1975 renovation but it was still ongoing the two times I interviewed in 1976. There was some residual stuff going on when I arrived on February 1, 1977. It was virtually complete when I arrived, with only a few residuals left to finish. The project was funded for only $4 million, certainly much less than needed. And it soon became painfully obvious that this so-called renovation had accomplished very, very little, either from a functional or aesthetics standpoint. It was indeed hardly worth the effort and disadvantageously, OSU Libraries had used up its place in the building renovation queue, and so I could not begin to lobby for a major overhaul until at least the 1980s, which I began to do at every opportunity. The proposed project then was estimated at $90 million, which interestingly wasn't too far off the mark with what actually happened over ten years later. It wasn't on the high priority list for capital projects, according to University needs and other University administrators' points of view. But it stayed on the list until the promise to do the renovation was made at my retirement reception in June of 1999. And that was a very happy ending to a long struggle. I, of course, never saw the building exactly as it was before the $4 million overhaul occurred, but it was difficult to see much having been done. Except for new furniture, that was the most obvious part.

Q. I should remember but there was the Sabastian Knowles Committee in the University Senate. That was during the Kirwan administration. Am I getting my dates correct?

A. No, it wasn't a Senate Committee to my best recollection. It simply was appointed; I'm trying to think what the committee was called. Sebastian Knowles, a member of Library Council, was asked to chair the committee. And it drew, it had appointments from across the board. Gay Dannelly served on that committee for the Libraries. I did not, but I was a resource et-officio member. And I think there were six or seven members, and I'm not going to mention them beyond Sebastian because I can't recall who they were. And they were to take a look at the entire situation of Library needs: Library development, thrust, where were Libraries going, what they would say about the need for buildings, and so forth and so on. And that went on for a good year. And Sebastian essentially took the responsibility to write the final report, which is a pretty thick one. Like all reports, you remember the color of the cover, light green. And it was very well done, and it had a lot of addendum documentation supporting arguments for a new building. I think it was very influential because it was a strong, strong endorsement.

Q. Yes, Sebastian, Professor of English, had a particularly good gift for eloquent hyperbole.

A. He certainly did and he still does.

Q. And so the report has not only hyperbole but a good deal of drama in it, which made for very good reading. I'm referring particularly to Sebastian Knowles, who

referred to the insertion of a floor in the historic reading room as an act of barbarism. It was not a true act of barbarism; I believe it was an act of necessity.

A. I think so, too. But that's the case I think, maybe an exceptional case. But a case where a committee report, I think, really made a difference. It made a difference, too, in the fact that the report became a goal of the new President, President Kirwan, who was in office and had to approve the commitment to renovate that building, and then he promptly left, went back to Maryland.

Q. He did leave and, in fact, we did an interview of his predecessor, E. Gordon Gee, who was asked why with all the fund-raising and capital improvements across the campus, was the Thompson Library not one of those projects? And the response was that he did not perceive the political situation and the financial situation as conducive to that kind of a project.

A. This was a huge commitment on the part of the institution because you only got "x" number of dollars every biennium. Those dollars were shrinking, in terms of what the Board of Regents could allocate for capital construction. And this took most of Ohio State's discretionary allocation for a whole biennium, each of two years, and then the rest became fund raising. I think, if I recall, the $108 million cost was about $70 million from the institution. Around about $35, $38 [million came] from fund raising.

Q. Correct. More like $30 million from fund raising. The University did manage to kick in more as the project, it was delayed for a year, and it became more expensive, and the University kicked in for that cost of delay.

A. So even though I was saying Sayonara at that time, it was a gratifying thing to have that commitment made at my retirement reception, which was not something that I expected. I expected it to be done, but I didn't expect Ed Ray to make the announcement. And then President Kirwan went back to be Chancellor of the University of Maryland, and Ed Ray went to be President at the University of Oregon. But nobody took that occasion to renege on the commitment, even though the two committers in a sense were gone.

Q. That's true. I go back to the Sebastian Knowles report. This was a recommendation of the University Senate Task Force and carried significant weight. It was also thoughtfully and strategically rolled into Kirwan's strategic plan, which President Karen Holbrook, in her five-year tenure, carried out – that the Libraries would be a 21st-century facility.

A. And I think we can all agree that the outcome is just splendid. The historic renovation aspect and the new construction aspect, the harmony between those two. The fact that the facade from the west looking east looks like an entirely new building and from the Oval, looking at the original east entrance, looks exactly like it did in 1913 or as exact as one can be.

Q. I agree with you about the harmony: The whole building through the thoughtfulness of the architects in the design process is light and easy to navigate, whereas the old Thompson Library, because it was an old building that had been cobbled internally many times, was difficult to navigate and in many places quite dingy and dark.

A. And dangerous. The stack tower was not a place that women wanted to frequent very often – all kinds of odd things went on there over the years. There wasn't much you could do about that because of the way the stacks were designed and the fact that they weren't meant to have public access. The stack tower was meant to have things paged from it by library employees.

Q. That's correct, and I think we were unable to locate the exact year in which that change was made.

A. It was a change that swept through the members of the Association of Research Libraries, almost like wild fire.

Q. Change that enabled undergraduates to have free roam.

A. Everybody [was able] to have access to the stacks. The same thing happened at Indiana University, and I would bet it happened within the same couple of years as it did at Ohio State. It was a very rapid movement, and sort of a product of the student unrest of the 70s.

Q. Yes, because undergraduate students then – and even to an extent now – felt themselves kind of second-class citizens on campus, despite efforts to the contrary. Bill, we're approaching the final portion of the interview in which we typically ask administrators to give us a sense of perspective about what they considered over their career as the most significant accomplishments, and the flip side, the disappointments.

A. Okay. This could probably be very long if I spent a lot of cerebral time on it but it's about a page of notations. First thing I would mention is library consolidation because that has had lasting outcome. We aren't going to re-decentralize, I think,

ever again. And so I think the outcome of that movement, carried to its logical conclusion, was the right thing to do and really resulted in a significant improvement, both budgetarily and most importantly in delivery of library service and availability of library materials.

Q. If I could add, a few years ago the University changed its budgeting to now charge units for square foot cost, and considering the square footage at the beginning of your administration, that would have entailed significant budgetary impact on the libraries.

A. Huge, I'm not sure what year that was; it was after I was out of office.

Q. Yes, it would have been …

A. Not long after.

Q. No, not long after, I believe it was early 2000s, and I think it had to do with the Fisher College of Business, the huge expansion there with budgetary impact upon building maintenance.

A. The second thing I would mention is securing the administration's commitment to fund renovation of the Thompson Library and upgrade virtually all other library physical plants during my tenure. Illustrations of that being the Business Library, which we've earlier mentioned, and the Fine Arts and Cartoon Research libraries. The commitment to renovate Thompson was a wonderful going-away present, so to speak. My participation, I think pivotal participation, in the finding and establishing of OhioLink, including provision of the book depositories, may have been the most important thing I did in larger library terms than being Director at Ohio State, not only for the State of Ohio but I think in sort of providing a model

that the rest of the country could look at. Many ramifications there, and I think OhioLink, while it may suffer vicissitudes in terms of funding levels, it will continue. It's just too good to let go of. Development and facilitation of special collections, which we've spent some time on already. I was very pleased to be able to do that. Sometimes you're in the right place at the right time. And it was certainly nothing I could do unilaterally; it had to have support, mostly internal to the Library. We didn't get ad hoc funding to do very much of it. We had to be creative. I think those are very lasting contributions, which will be there 50 and 100 years from now. I see no reason why that wouldn't be the case. Persuading the Office of Academic Affairs to establish the Acquisitions Index, I think was a very important contribution, which also has remaining value, because the annual increments became part of the base budget. I don't know what the total acquisitions budget is now – very large, I assume. But it would be very much smaller if that Index hadn't become part of the base every year to make it what it is today. Something that seems rather mundane but in the context of issues within the University, balancing the budget over each of 23 years. Never had any red ink. Maybe a little bit during the year internal to the Library, but never finished with any red ink. And there were at least three Deans sitting around the table during my tenure on the Dean's Council who lost their positions because of that. Because they seemed unable or unwilling to balance the budget. So it was something that Academic Affairs took rather seriously. It's not a discussion we ever had to have. That meant doing without a great deal. Creating a preservation office because I think that's an enduring internal service that was absolutely essential to establish,

and now we have one that's in the top tier. And helping establish the extended, Kent State [University] Master of Library Science program at Ohio State, to provide opportunities for hundreds if not thousands of central Ohioans who wanted to seek graduate library education, which was available after the closure of the program at Case Western and only from Kent State University's central campus. The Dean of the Library School at Kent State, Bob Rogers, came to see me about the possibility of a collaboration here. I can't remember the year; it was in the '80s certainly. I took the issue to the University, to Academic Affairs, to Associate Provost Elmer Baumer, as I recall. And discussions ensued rather vigorously at his behest with the College of Education, which was seen as a collaborator from Ohio State with this program. And it was heading in that direction, where it would turn into a joint degree program with Ohio State and Kent State contributing. And Bob Rogers, one of those really tragic cases, went into the hospital with a sore thumb or something and died a couple of days later. And the whole process fell apart because his successor wasn't appointed for a long time; the interim person at Kent State wasn't about to do anything. His eventual permanent successor was not interested. And so what we did was simply help Kent State establish their program as an extension program here on West Campus. We provided them with those facilities. They have now moved to the State Library, as you probably know, so there really is no connection any more. There wasn't an official connection. The degree from that program was a Kent State degree but an awful lot of our library faculty taught in that program, according to their specialties: you, Wes, Carol Diedrichs, Marge Murfin, others,

many others. I don't think they could have fulfilled their curriculum without the help of our qualified faculty.

Q. In fact, one of the issues was that, I believe at various points in time, the enrollment in the Columbus campus, the OSU campus, exceeded the Kent State campus.

A. It was almost entirely a part-time program. Students were only part-time and mostly weekends and evening classes. But I think they offer a full-time curriculum now in the regular daytime hours, so it may still orient most of them in that direction.

Q. As I recall, ultimately I believe the Regents killed the initiative by concluding that there wasn't sufficient demand in the state for two publicly funded library school programs.

A. Yes, I think that's right and it could be because Kent State was northeast. It wasn't accessible to a lot of people. The Case program, which closed down rather precipitously, was always seen as a specialty in medical librarianship. It was a very high-profile program. I guess they made a decision it wasn't carrying its weight financially.

Q. Exactly. The decision there was also that the cost of tuition made it prohibitively expensive to draw students, and so it was just a bad situation for both students and the University.

A. The last thing I would mention and things that I think are noteworthy in a positive sense, the contributions of my career: the reconciliation of faculty status for library faculty, which was a festering issue when I got here and it festered even

more after that. And I think it has been working smoothly ever since we worked out our own principles and pattern of administration and criteria for promotion and tenure, and the way in which those cases are reviewed outside the library. And I'm sure our profile of rank structure is very, very different than it was when I came, where almost everyone was an instructor and not destined to come out of that very readily.

Q. Correct. We had numerous tenured assistant professors. Of course, the rules for the University changed, as you pointed out earlier, in the 1990s, so that assistant professor was no longer a tenurable rank.

A. Right. Disappointments? I think in retrospect, after almost ten years of retirement, I think number one would be not being able to stay on to see the Thompson Library renovation to fruition. With the trials and tribulations, library consolidation and the fact that directors' positions are often kind of hot seat positions, I was feeling pretty burned out. And I'm not sure I would have had the energy, creative energy to lead that effort. But at least I was watching from the wings. Along with that disappointment, there was the death of an assistant director who had been with OSU Libraries for, I think, close to 35 years. Jay Ladd was his name. He was the libraries' historian. You could go to Jay to ask what had happened in the past. He was a great colleague. He worked assiduously in trying to lead department libraries and was an advocate on their behalf. I just thought the world of Jay and he had a difficult cancer death, and that was not long before it was time to make a decision about go or stay, and I'm sure the fact that Jay was no longer around the place was becoming a reason. Other people were moving on,

not through death, thank goodness, but you had a constant changing of the guard. And it just seemed like it was time. Even so, you can regret not being around to stand on top of something as grand as the library renovation at Thompson. Not taking the time to be more involved and more effective with fund raising. I looked at Cornerstones [an OSU Development annual report] and saw that we raised $235,000 in ’77-’78. That was the first year I was in office, only a partial year. And we did raise $3 million in ’98-’99, the last full year of record. That seems a little much, as I recall, but there certainly wasn’t $3 million every year. But our Friends of the Library operation, while it may have been intended to be a fund-raising operation, was not that, did not account for very much fund raising in the course of any given year. The whole orientation to fund raising was much muted and certainly very soft. I think it all changed with the first campus campaign in terms of focus and energy and real drive to raise big dollars. To do that everybody had to participate. It certainly was never discussed with me as part of the job of being Director of Libraries when I interviewed. It would be a form of primary discussion for anybody they interviewed after that.

Q. With the caveat that the Libraries continue to face the awkwardness of not having designated alumni, and much of fund raising is constituency based, and so the Libraries have had a tough time to negotiate, to define a set of donors that are not pledged already to others.

A. And I don’t think that will ever change. I think for the Library to be successful in fund raising, to some degree I’m sure this was true in raising money for Thompson renovation, you have to have some kind of presidential thrust. You

have to have somebody like Gordon Gee telling a donor, “You may be a graduate of the law school but we really need you to step up and do this kind of thing for the greater University.” I think there’s still probably a prohibition about talking to donors who are in someone else’s bailiwick without getting approval from up the line.

Q. There is that communication awkwardness, yes.

A. Some of the largest donors for Thompson renovation, maybe the biggest one, were not even OSU alumni.

Q. That’s correct. Athletics was extremely helpful in sharing and encouraging its donors to help the Libraries, and that became referred to as the Robinson family is the first major donor to the renovation.

A. The Cohen Reading Room, is that what’s it called? The Cohen family?

Q. I would have to check; I’m not sure.

A. So it was pleasing to learn that the Library was able to fulfill its obligation in raising the amount of money required, and that the University was willing to kick in a little more. No estimate ever turns out to be the final cost. And the final thing I’ve mentioned, I’ve hinted at that already, certainly. I regret I did not do more externals. By that I mean, outreach, fundraising and just plain public relations. Not that I didn’t do any of that kind of thing but that I focused on administering the Library, and was not staffed sufficiently in my view to spend a lot of time outside. My successors have certainly done differently than I did, in that respect.

Q. If I can add, each of us inherits and you inherited a Library which you said earlier, was not sufficiently developed in an administrative managerial sense, and your successors had the opportunity to build on what you created.

A. Well, I hope that's true. They certainly, have spent, I wouldn't guess percentages, but it must be and have been a hefty part of his working time, in raising funds and I'm sure that is not all apple pie, either. One thing I haven't mentioned that I think for the record ought to be, and that is the Statue of Winged Victory in the restored reading room, in the Grand Reading Room as I call it. Just for the record, we have to say that that original statue, a plaster of Paris of the original which is in the Louvre in Paris, graced the reading room when it was opened in 1913, the gift of the class of 1892, am I saying that right? Yes, I think it was '92 because I think it was the occasion of their 20th class reunion when they made the decision to make that gift, which they were not financially able to do when they were seniors. Not surprisingly, since I believe the class was only 30 or so strong. And probably had no wherewithal to do that kind of thing. And the statue stood there overlooking students and others who studied in that room, 16 feet in the air. And sometime in the late '50s apparently it began to deteriorate, being made of plaster of Paris, and hollow inside. And according to Lewis Branscomb, the Director, it had become a public nuisance in terms of potentially damaging something or harming someone by having pieces of it fall off. And so sometime in, I think 1959, in the twilight of dawn, it was hustled out of the Library and discarded. And that's the one thing I was delegated to work on in identifying a source for replacing the statue in the renovated grand reading room, which became rather difficult. It was very easy to

find a source back in the early part of the 20th century but very difficult to find a source for that kind of statue at this point in time. But we did find a place in Boston, and the statue was installed in time for the dedication and it's made out of some kind of resin, so it should be there a hundred years from now unless someone wants to take it off of its pedestal. And I think it looks very grand and I hope it makes people feel as good as it did when it was first installed in 1913. Was it an undergraduate student who waxed so eloquent, or a graduate student, about his experience of the Grand Reading Room?

Q. Yes. Talking about the majesty of the room.

A. It had everything in it.

Q. And when I do Library tours, I point to the statue and remind people that the original is in the Louvre, but the Louvre wouldn't share the statue with us. I thank you very much, Bill, for this opportunity and the informative interview.